



## ***Benefits Administration Letter***

**Number: 04-302**

**Date: February 26, 2004**

### **Subject: March 2004 Headcount**

This is a reminder for you to submit your semiannual Headcount for the March 2004 reporting period. The Headcount is reported semiannually (March and September) by all payroll offices that withhold monies from salaries for participants in the Civil Service Retirement System, Federal Employees Retirement System, Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, and/or the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Programs.

The March 2004 Headcount will be for the payroll paid during the FIRST 15 DAYS of March 2004. If you pay twice during the first 15 days of March, the Headcount will be for the first payroll paid during that period. For example, if you pay your employees on March 1st and March 15th, the first payroll paid will be used for your Headcount (March 1st). For monthly pay cycles, the reporting period will be February 1, 2004 through February 29, 2004.

The March 2004 Headcount must be submitted no later than March 18, 2004. We ask that you notify us if you anticipate a delay or any difficulties in submitting it by that date. Under no circumstances, however, should you delay transmitting your normal RITS report because your Headcount is not ready to be submitted.

We would prefer that you FAX your OPM Form 1523 and SF 2812-A to us. If you are one of the few remaining payroll offices that still report withholdings and contributions via the hard copy SF 2812, please FAX a copy of your SF 2812 to us with your OPM Form 1523 and SF 2812-A. Please use CLEAR originals to ensure that we receive legible copies. Our FAX number for Headcount submission is 202-606-0701.

OMB Bulletin No. 01-02 -- *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements* – requires payroll providers to have performed by their auditors agreed-upon procedures to assist OPM in assessing the reasonableness of withholdings and contributions and Headcount reporting. Due to the requirement that annual financial statements be published by November 15, beginning in FY 2004, your auditors will need to perform the agreed-upon procedures using the March 2004 Headcount. To provide for this, it is *critical* that you retain in a secure and easily accessible environment all automated and hard-copy files supporting the March 2004 Headcount. This is

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*Civil Service  
Retirement  
System*

*Federal Employees'  
Group Life  
Insurance Program*

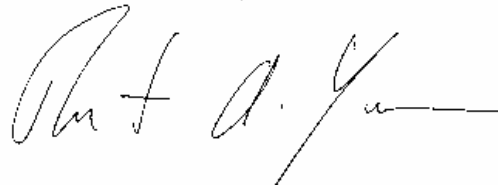
*Federal Employees  
Health Benefits  
Program*

*Federal Employees  
Retirement  
System*

*Federal  
Long Term  
Care Insurance  
Program*

essential even if you will transfer the responsibility for payroll services to another provider during or soon after the end of FY 2004.

If you have any questions concerning the preparation of your Headcount report, please call our Funds Management Branch at 202-606-4118.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Yuran". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Robert A. Yuran, Manager  
Financial Policy Group  
Center for Financial Services